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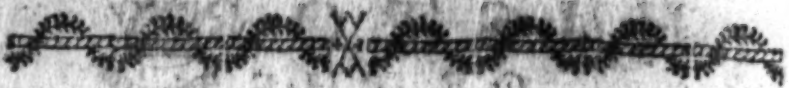
THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Seven Champions
OF
CHRISTENDOM.

PART the FIRST.



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The First Part of the History of the
Seven Champions.



C H A P. I.

The Birth, Parentage, and glorious Exploits of St. George for England.

S O O N after the ruin of Troy sprang up the Seven Champions of Christendom; and since we may, without partiality reckon St. George the worthiest, we will treat of him first.

He was descended from Eneus, who after the ruin of old Troy, wandered into Italy, and there ended his days, leaving his son Ascanius in his place. Ascanius dying, left Sylvius; who died and left Brutus, who first occupied Britain; being inhabited by Giants and Wild Men, without government. These Brutus, by his policy overcame, and soon after he

divided them into countries, and so built Troy Nova, now called London; and after that Coventry, where our famous St. George was born; whose mother, whilst with-child of him, dreamed she conceived a Dragon, that would be the cause of her death; being troubled at her dream, she told it to her husband, who taking only one Knight with him, went to the walls of Kalyb, to consult the enchantress about it, when at her gate they found a brazen horn, which they sounded; no sooner had they done, but they heard a terrible voice make this answer: That the Lady should die in child-bed of a son, who should be a famous champion, and kill a Dragon, Brutus, amazed at these words, departed home, and found the lady delivered, but dead, and the child stole by the enchantress Kalyb; which grieved him so, that he wandered into a strange land, and there died.

The enchantress brought up St. George in her cave fourteen years, letting him want for nothing, giving him liberty to walk the woods, attended by ten frightful sayters, fearing he would make his escape

for the enchantress so much doated upon him, that at last she lusted for him; but he utterly refused her, by reason of her witchcraft: Nevertheless, hoping to get his liberty, he seemed the more willing; by which means he so gained her favour, that she resigned all her power to him, and told him his birth and parentage. So taking him by the hand, she led him to a brazen castle, where the other six champions were. — Then she led him into a stable, where were six horses, belonging to the six Knights; after which she led him into a room, where was the richest armour in the world; so chusing the



best helmet and breastplate, she put them on with her own hand, and gave him a palfrey in his: Now, said she, thou art

invincible. Thus being blinded with lust she put her silver wand into his hand, which caused her destruction ; for as they walked by a rock, she struck it with a wand, and it opened, where he saw a number of infants she had killed by her enchantments. Follow me, said she, and I will shew thee more ; so stepping in, he, with his wand struck the rock, and it closed her up. — Thus ended the enchantress, whom we will leave to the fury of the devils, and give an account of St. George's glorious actions.

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C H A P. V.

St. George kills a Dragon, and redeems Sabra from Death.

AS soon as St. George had released the six champions out of the enchanted castle, he took his leave, and they travelled several ways in search of adventures; when St. George went into Egypt, where meeting a poor hermit, he asked of him where he might get a lodging. The hermit told him he could find no entertainment, for a poisonous Dragon each day devoured a virgin, and had destroyed all except the King's daughter; and the King-

had promised his daughter in marriage to any Knight that killed the Dragon, and the crown after his death. St. George hearing this, desired to lie in his cave that night, and next morning he would fight the Dragon. The old man gladly received him; and the next morning he mounted his steed, and rode to meet the Dragon; but on his way he met the princess all in tears. He gave them comfort



by telling them that he would kill the Dragon or lose his life. The Princess admired his courage, gave him thanks, and told him, If he succeeded he should be well rewarded. St. George kissed her hand, desiring her to go back, till she heard farther; so on he marched to the encounter. No sooner had he entered the

valley, but the Dragon espied him, and made a terrible noise. Then St. George rode up bravely to him, and striking his spears against his scales, shivered it into pieces. Then the Dragon with his tail, struck him off his horse; so that he was forced to draw his sword, and fight on foot; at last, when he was almost suffocated with the stench of the Dragon's breath, he espied a naked place under his left wing, where he thrust his sword into his heart, and killed him. — When done, he gave God thanks; then cutting off the head of the Dragon, he put it on



the point of his spear, in order to carry it to the King, and claim the Princess: but on his way he was beset by many armed men belonging to Aminder, King

of Morocco on purpose to destroy him; for fear he should wed Sabra the King's daughter, whom Aminder had a love for: But as treachery seldom prevails, so our hero St. George beat them all before Aminder's face; and then hastened to the King of Egypt, to tell him the Dragon was slain. The King overjoyed, ordered the bells to ring, and bonfires to be made and that St. George should be entertained according to his merit. He was welcomed by the King himself, as soon as he came to court, especially by the fair princess, who from that time loved him entirely, and presented him with a ring of gold off her own finger: But the King of Morocco envying St. George, strove to poison him with a cup of wine; as soon as he touched it, the diamond in his ring turned pale, and his nose bled, wherefore he refused it, and the princess cried out, 'Treason!' but the King her father was so prejudiced in Aminder's favour, that he would not believe it. This so emboldened Aminder, that he accused St. George of being a Christian, and of striving to convert the Princess. This so enraged her father, that he swore St. George's

death, but not daring to attempt his life openly, he sent him with a letter to the Sultan of Persia, desiring the Sultan to destroy him. So St. George went to the Sultan, in order to deliver this letter; but on his way seeing one of their temples, and being enraged at their idolatry, he broke their images, which occasioned the people to seek his life; but in one day he slew near five hundred of them. This made a great noise all over the country; so that they arose in great numbers, and at last took him, and brought him before the Sultan, and told him what he had done. At this the Sultan swore he should suffer the most cruel death; but our champion told him he had done as God had directed him, and delivered him the letter from Ptolomy King of Egypt; as soon as he had read it, he ordered his guards to cast him into a deep dungeon, till the day of execution; where he had not been long before they put down two hungry lions to devour him; but he soon broke his bands, and found an old rusty sword, with which he killed them both. The Sultan hearing this, ordered him to be faster bound. Here he lived seven

years upon rats and mice. In the mean time Ptolomy forced his daughter to marry the King of Morocco; but she hating him, went to a Necromancer, to know how she might preserve her virginity from him, who advised her to steep a chain of gold seven days in dragon's milk and tyger's blood, and then wear it about her neck; and no man should have any power over her; so by this means she preserved her virginity for St. George; who



at present we shall leave in a dark dungeon, and give some account of the other Champions.



C H A P. III.

St. Dennis of France lives seven Years in
the Shape of a Hart.



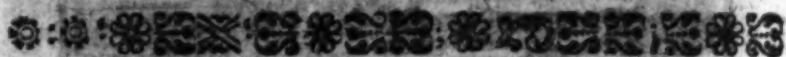
FAIR Eugenia for her pride was
transformed into a Mulberry Tree;
and it being St. Dennis's fortune to tra-
vel by that tree, he was transformed into
an Hart: after which, seeing himself in
a spring near to this tree, he began to
lament his condition in the following
manner,

I was a man that fame did gain,
But now a Hart in shew;
When I shall be a man again,
Alas! I do not know.

When a voice from the tree made the
following reply.

Be easy Knight, thy case is mine,
 But seven years hence we shall shine ;
 For by the eating of a Rose,
 Thou shalt finish both our woes.

At seven years end his horse brought
 two roses in his teeth, of which he eat,
 and became a man ; so fetching his sword
 he cut down the mulberry-tree, and there
 appeared the King's daughter ; where-
 upon they went to her father's palace, and
 were received with great Joy.



C H A P. VI.

St. James of Spain kills a Fire-Drake and
 a Boar ; and of his stealing a King's
 Daughter.

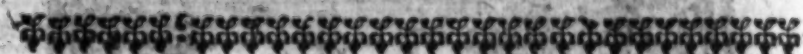
ST. James, in his road to Jerusalem,
 met with a fire-drake, which held
 him battle seven days ; but at last he
 overcame him, and then proceeded to
 Cappadocia, and from thence to Jerusa-
 lem. At his arrival he heard the noise
 of trumpet, which were for the enter-
 tainment of the King and his Knights,
 who were that day gone to hunt the wild
 bear. The King, as usual, promised a

reward to him who should kill the boar.
 Away went St. James, who before the
 King got to the forest had killed the big-



gest ever seen. As soon the King saw
 it, he gave him the reward, and asked
 what country and religion he was of? St.
 James told him he was a Spaniard and a
 Christian. This so enraged the King,
 that he told him he must die, according
 to the law of the land; but because he
 had killed the boar, he should chuse his
 death. He desired to be shot by maidens:
 but as soon as they saw St. James, they
 were so pleased with his looks, they re-
 fused it. Then the king commanded
 they should cast lots who should kill him,
 and it fell on the king's own daughter;
 but she falling on her knees, begged his

life, which was granted, on condition he immediately quitted the land, but before he went he stole the King's daughter, and carried her with him to Spain.



C H A P. V.

St. Andrew slays a Giant, and travels among Spirits. St. Patrick releases six Ladies. St. David slays Prince Palatine, and sleeps seven Years in an enchanted Garden.

ST. Anthony, after passing thro' many dangerous places came at last to a great castle, where was a Giant none dare fight, having six of the King of Thrace's daughters with him; five of them transformed to swans, to save their virginity. This Giant St. Anthony slew, and left the castle to them.

The famous St. Andrew of Scotland, after he had travelled through a vale full of sad fiends for seven days without any light, at last came to the castle where lay the Giant St. Andrew slew. Entering the castle, he found the Thracian King and his Knights, bewailing the loss

of his daughters, St. Andrew told them, if they would call on his Christian God he would restore them to their true shape. They were so enraged as to endeavour to kill him, but he beat them all; so the King and his Knights turned Christians, and called upon God together, and straight ways all the ladies recovered their former shape. After this they went to the court; but instead of Joy they met sorrow, for the Champion of Italy had stolen away the King's daughter Rosalinda; which when St. Andrew understood, he went away privately for Ireland with the other five daughters, who were met by thirty wild satyrs, and used very cruelly. At last St. Patrick hearing a noise, ran to their relief and killed most of the sayters at one blow, and the rest fled. St. Patrick asked the ladies who they were. They answered, They were daughters to the King of Thrace, who had been transformed to swans, to preserve them from a Giant's lust; but at last St. Anthony slew the Giant, and St. Andrew by his prayers, restored them to their former shape, which was more than their father and all his Knights could do, by

their prayers to their idols ; and at sight of this miracle their father and his followers embraced Christianity. Afterwards they all wandered to seek St. Andrew, whom we will leave now to say something of St. David of Wales.

St. David behaved himself so bravely at the court of the Count Palatine, that the Count made him his companion. — On a festival, their being Tilts and Tournaments, St. David being champion, entered the first ; and the Count's son, ambitious of honour, went to answer him, and at first was like to worse St. David ; but the next encounter St. David felled both man and horse to the ground, and killed them both. This so enraged the Count that he contrived to destroy him, but he could not effect it. Then he sent him to bring an enchanter's head called Ormondin, and St. David went to a rock where he found a sword fast ; this he strove to move, but not being able, he fell down, and slept for seven years, till St. George came to release him.

C H A P.

C H A P. VI.

St. George gets out of Prison, and releases St. David.

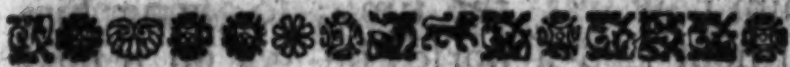


BRAVE St. George being almost starved in the dungeon, got loose by a bar of iron, with which he made his way out, slew the King's grooms, and took his best horse and armour, and rode to the city gates, where calling aloud to the porters, he told him St. George had broke loose, and he must follow him. The porter opening the gates, he rode away, all the town pursuing him, but could not overtake him.—On his journey he was at a very great strait for victuals, and seeing a lady at the gate, he asked for some relief but she bid him be gone, for if her hus-

band, who was a Giant, should see him he would kill him. But St. George answered he would rather die in fight than with hunger. The Giant hearing this, came out, so they fell to battle for some hours; but the weather being hot, and the Giant fat, he sweated so that it blinded him, and in the end slew him; he



then entered the castle, and refreshed his horse and himself. After this he wandered to the enchanted garden, where St. David was sleeping, and seeing a sword stuck in the rock, he gave it a pull, and it came out. Immediately the enchantment was broke, and he awaked, and gave him thanks; after which they took leave of each other.



C H A P. VII.

St. George steals Sabra, the King of
Egypt's Daughter.



ST. George, in his travels in Barbary met a hermit, who shewed him the palace of the court, saying that the King of Morocco was a hunting; he knowing that was the time, changed cloaths with the hermit, and went to the court, where he soon saw his wish'd for charmer, coming to give alms to the poor. — At last, coming to St. George, he gave her the ring she had given him: she immediately knew it, and taking him by the hand, she led him into the hall, and there they both wept for joy. She told

him now was the time; so giving him armour and a horse, he got up behind him, and away they rode till they was almost starved. At last seeing a deer, he jumped off, and left Sabra with a servant, and went and slew the deer; but at his return he found the servant killed by two lions, and his Lady safe, by which he



knew her to be a virgin; but he killed the lions, and afterwards dressed the venison. Then pursuing his journey he entered the territories of Greece, where at Tilts and Tournaments made for the King's wedding, he met the other six Champions, who behaved so bravely, and overcame all the Knights there, insomuch that the Pagan princes all proclaimed war against Christendom, and threatened re-

venge against the Seven Champions for the injuries they done them in stealing so many King's daughters. The Champions hearing this, departed each to his own country, to raise forces to oppose the Heathenish Princes; there they were entertained with great joy.



C H A P. VIII.

The Champions overcome the Pagans. The sad News St. George received from Sabra, and the manner of his delivering her; with her Sory.

AFTER the Seven Champions were departed to their respective dominions, the Pagans were not slow in raising forces to assist against the Christians, and went to Hungary; which was the appointed place for the two parties to meet.

No sooner were they met but they fell to, and both parties fought outrageously, but in the end the Pagans were subdued, and Aminder (who had contrived to take St. George's life) was taken prisoner, with many others.

Whilst the Champions and the rest of the Europeans were rejoicing, a Knight came and desired to speak in private with St. George: and being known by his speech to be of England, St. George very readily consented. As soon as they were retired, the Knight told him that the fair Sabra, who he had left at Coventry, was condemned to die. — How, says St. George, who could be guilty, of accusing her, whose soul is whiter than snow.

Here he acquainted the other six champions of the sad news he had got brought him; and then appointed St. David the Commander in General in his absence, he departed.

After long and tedious travelling he arrived in England, and it happened to be the day on which Sabra was to be executed, and no Champion had as yet appeared for her. However, just as she approached the pile St. George came, and demanded entrance in defence of the Lady. Upon this the trumpet sounded the charge, and immediately the two noble champions rushed together with great fury, and in the end St. George was conqueror, and thereupon went and demand-

ed the lady, which was readily granted, and as soon as she was released she knew St. George, and was overjoyed to see him. As soon as they had recovered themselves from their past fatigues, St. George desired the reason of her confinement, the which she told him in these terms.



“ Some months after your departure, the lustful Earl of Coventry happened to see me, and was enflamed with a desire of enjoying me, and therefore he found means to meet me in a grove, and told me, that if I did not comply, he would force me ; I therefore desired an hour's time to consider of it ; this he consented to, but would not let me go from him, so set down and fell asleep, when drawing out a dagger, I gave him a fatal blow

which was the only way to preserve my chastity) and for which I was like to die.

When Sabra came to the end of her story, St. George embraced her tenderly, thanking her for the constant love which she bore him; and then sent directions to the other champions in what manner they should make an end of the war, which they did, and then came to England, where the nuptials between St. George and Sabra were solemnized with the utmost magnificence.

End of the FIRST PART.



